

NORFOLK, VIRGINIA

REGULAR SESSION OF COUNCIL

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2013

President Fraim called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with the following members present: Mr. Protogyrou, Mr. Riddick, Mr. Smigiel, Dr. Whibley, Ms. Williams and Mr. Winn. Mr. Burfoot was absent.

He thereupon called for Council interests.

A. COUNCIL INTERESTS

1. Councilman Riddick reiterated an earlier request for repaving on Marne Avenue. He also suggested relocating the fire station to a property between Lens and Argonne Avenues.
2. Councilman Winn asked the City Manager to schedule time for the City Assessor to report on appraisals for surplus buildings.
3. Councilwoman Williams noted that recent utility work at Boush Street and the Exxon Service Station left the street in poor condition and asked that it be corrected.
4. Councilman Smigiel relayed that he will attend the VML conference October 13th through October 15th and invited Council Members to join him.
5. Mayor Fraim relayed that he went to NSU to welcome the new president and to express support on behalf of the City Council and the City. He asked Mr. Kiefer to look into storm water drainage issues on all campus streets as soon as possible.

B. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

Mr. Ron Williams reported as follows: Local governments should not see a major impact unless the shutdown continues for longer than a month. There is no foreseen impact on specific services shared with state and federal funding; however, if the shutdown continues past October there will likely be reductions in some services. The Norfolk Naval Station Transit Extension Study has been cancelled until further notice. Social Security payments will continue, but new claims will not be processed. Current grants will be honored. There are approximately 25,000 federal employees in the Hampton Roads area furloughed. The Commonwealth created the Virginia Federal Action Contingency Trust (FACT Fund) which is to counteract actions taken by the federal government that adversely impact citizens and the economy of Virginia. Questions remain regarding: the time and extent of the shutdown; whether or not any temporary measures will be taken; if federal employees will receive back pay; and the impact of a decline in tax revenues. Norfolk has established a Staff Task Force to monitor developments and to communicate with intergovernmental agencies at the local, state and federal level. Other steps taken include: developing spending reduction plans for all city departments; moderating the filling of vacant positions; establishing coordination for a hiring center for transitioning military personnel and veterans; and monitoring direct aid opportunities for residents and businesses.

C. VISITNORFOLK

Mr. Tony DiFilippo stated that the Norfolk Tourism and Research Foundation provided analyses on potential markets for Norfolk. Since its inception they have raised and invested more than \$200,000 in private donations. Several studies were undertaken: Norfolk Visitor Profile and Economic Impact Study, 2006; The Drive Market, 2011; Inter-City Visitation Study, 2012; The Culinary Traveler Study, 2012; and Updated Norfolk Visitor Profile and Economic Impact Study, 2013-in process. These studies ensure that our marketing investments are highly targeted and well researched. He noted that the Waterside Live and the Hilton Hotel & Conference Center will ultimately add to results. Mayor Fraim suggested that they examine how we get information to the more casual visitor who might be visiting a relative for a couple of days or are driving through on their way to another state.

Specific data and agency strategies are as follows:

- The state estimates visitor spending in Norfolk to be \$727 million yearly.
- Approximately 5,000 people stay in Norfolk hotel rooms yearly which generate tax revenue equal to that of a \$204,000 house.
- The hospitality industry creates approximately 7,000 jobs.
- More than 463 million people saw ads about Norfolk last year.
- Washington, D.C. Metro bus ads utilized as well as social media and online marketing.
- Support attractions and festivals.
- Advertisement shown in Times Square between June 15 and September 20; television ads in Washington, D.C., Philadelphia and North Carolina.
- Participated in more than 65 trade shows 2013-2014.
- About 23,000 visitors go to online web site *visitnorfolktoday.com*.
- Picked up by more than 300 media outlets and reached more than 75 million people.

D. SMART PROCESSING

David Sullivan, Chief Information Officer and Frank Duke, Director of Planning, reported as follows:

- The Care Center is now taking calls beginning at 7:00 a.m. and calls have increased 139% from a year ago.
- The Online Request Tracker processes 110 requests daily on average with 106 closed per work day.
- A one-stop development services center is being located in City Hall.
- Electronic building and site plan review process is under development.
- Work is underway to improve permitting times.

E. H209 FORUM

Mr. Ron Williams stated that last month staff participated in the H209 Forum through FUGRO of the Henry Hudson Foundation which focused on flooding strategies. Those that participated in this forum were New York City, New York State, New Jersey, The Netherlands, Rotterdam and Amsterdam. Other participants included the U.S. Secretary of HUD and various White House officials. The forum gave our staff an opportunity to share our flooding strategies and to learn about new strategies. This relationship is important because in the future we will need to look for alternative funding mechanisms and also other innovations and strategies. Staff is in the process of developing a resiliency plan.

F. TIDEWATER COMMERCE CENTER, 630-660 TIDEWATER DRIVE

Mr. Duke, Director of Planning, reported on the following items:

The location is at the intersection of Tidewater Drive and Brambleton Avenue. The request is to change the PlaNorfolk 2030 on these parcels from industrial to commercial and to change the zoning from limited industrial to commercial corridor. The applicant has proffered conditions associated with the rezoning. The VDOT review revealed minimal impact on the surrounding roadway network maintained by VDOT. They will update their traffic analysis for impacts on the city street network. The conceptual development plan is for two retail buildings; one would be a 12,000-square-foot building and one would be a 10,000-square-foot building. There will be two right-in/right-out vehicular access ways from Tidewater Drive and no vehicular access to/from Brambleton Avenue. They have also committed to a stormwater management amenity with a pedestrian walkway. Staff recommends approval and the City Planning Commission voted in favor of the application.

G. PAWN SHOPS IN THE FIVE POINTS PCO

The request is from the Norview Civic League for an amendment to the text of the Zoning Ordinance to allow pawn shops in the Five Points PCO by Special Exception. There is an existing nonconforming pawn shop within the Five Points PCO that is grandfathered; however, they cannot expand or relocate. They would like to relocate in the future. Another issue is that City Code 24-26 restricts the number of pawn shops in the city at 16 and prohibits any relocation of a pawn shop until the total number of pawn shops is less than 16. There are currently more than 16 pawn shops operating in the city so this provision would have to be waived if this pawn shop relocation request is approved. There were no proponents to speak in favor of the application at the City Planning Commission public hearing; however, there was a lot of opposition. Staff recommends approval based on the existence of a pawn shop already located in the area. The City Planning Commission denied the application (5-1) based on: neighborhood opposition and existence of only one pawn shop in the area. After the City Planning Commission Public hearing they were preparing to bring this item to City Council for action and the Five Points Partnership asked for a delay so they could have more time to understand and evaluate this request. After additional meetings there was no opposition cited and that is why they are now ready to bring this item forward to City Council.